

Since 1940

WISCONSIN ENERGY *Cooperative* NEWS

May 2021

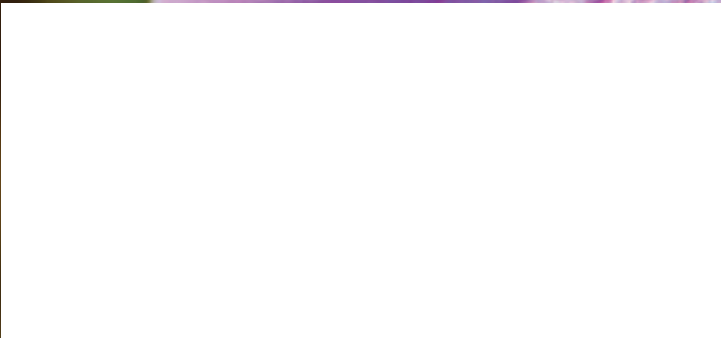
WILD FOR FLOWERS

**Brewer Baseball
Ticket Giveaway!
Details Inside**



**Richland Electric
Cooperative**

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



ARE YOU READY FOR SOME BREWER BASEBALL?

**Richland Electric
Cooperative is giving
members the opportunity
to watch the Milwaukee
Brewers play at American
Family Field (formerly Miller
Park) this summer.**

All you have to do is fill out the form
below and return it to Richland Electric
Cooperative for a chance to win
a set of tickets! We'll hold drawings
periodically throughout
the summer.

Yes, I would LOVE to go to a Milwaukee Brewer game this summer!

Name _____

Address _____

Phone No. _____ Email Address _____

Do you have a special Brewer/baseball memory? We'd love to hear it! Please share your favorite memory below:

Please return to Richland Electric Cooperative, 1027 N. Jefferson St., P.O. Box 439, Richland Center, WI 53581



**Richland Electric
Cooperative**

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



TREE TRIMMING IMPROVES SERVICE FOR ALL

One of the things I love best about our community is the natural beauty that surrounds us. We are fortunate to have so many trees that offer beauty, shade, and a habitat for all sorts of birds and other wildlife. We know that you appreciate our community for many of the same reasons.

At Richland Electric Cooperative (REC) we strive to balance maintaining beautiful surroundings and ensuring a reliable power supply by keeping power lines clear in rights-of-way (ROW).

While we recognize and appreciate the beauty of trees, there are three main benefits to tree trimming in ROW areas. However, before touching on the main reasons, let me explain what a “right-of-way” is and how it may impact you. A right-of-way is the land we use to construct, maintain, replace, or repair underground and overhead power lines. Rights-of-way enable the co-op to provide clearance from trees and other obstructions that could hinder the power line installation, maintenance, or operation. ROW areas are typically on public lands or located near a business or home. Regardless, REC must be able to maintain the power lines above and below the ROW. The overall goal of our vegetation management program is to provide reliable power to our members while maintaining the beauty of our community. Proactive vegetation management benefits co-op members in three tangible ways.

Safety

First and foremost, we care about our members and put their safety and that of our lineworkers above all else. Overgrown vegetation and trees pose a risk to power lines. For example, if trees are touching power lines in our members’ yards, they can pose grave danger to families. If children can access those trees, they can potentially climb into a danger zone. Electricity can arc, or jump, from a power line to a nearby conductor like a tree. A proactive approach also diminishes

the chances of fallen branches or trees during severe weather events that make it more complicated and dangerous for lineworkers to restore power.

Reliability

Of course, one of the biggest benefits of a smart vegetation management program is reliability. Strategic tree trimming reduces the frequency of downed lines causing power outages. Generally speaking, healthy trees don’t fall on power lines, and clear lines don’t cause problems. Proactive trimming and pruning keeps lines clear to promote reliability.

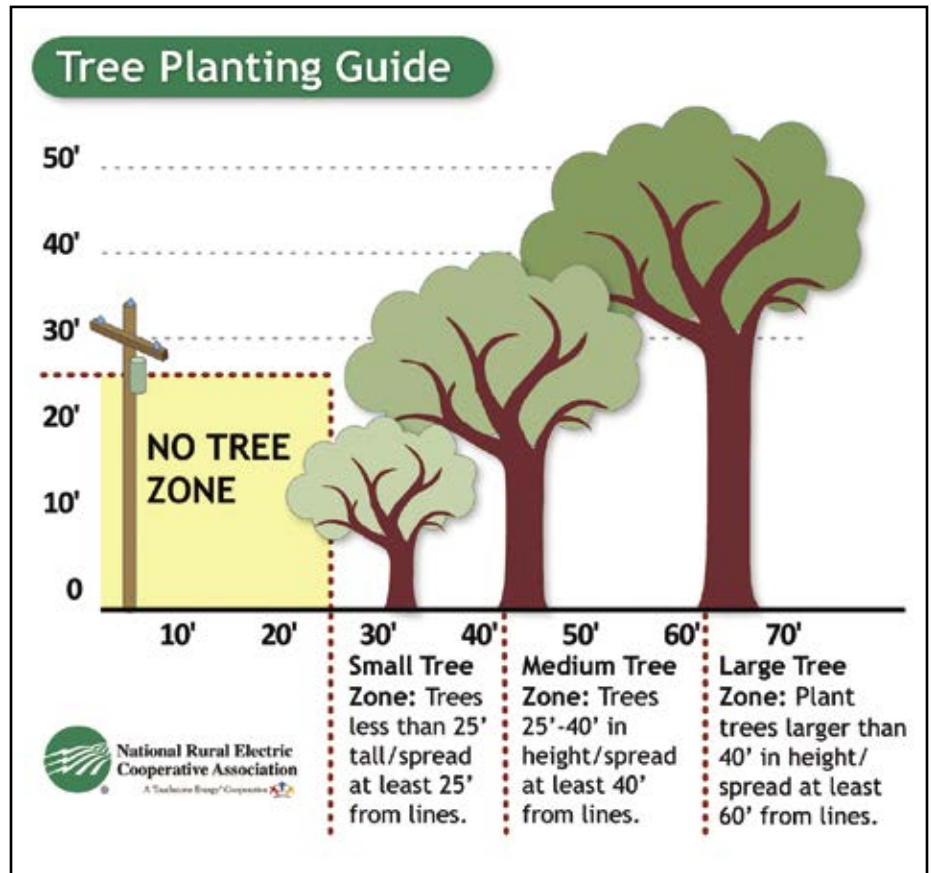
We also use data and the technology to maximize the efficiency of our operation. This includes our vegetation management plan. We contract our tree work with Zielies Tree Service and share an arborist with Oakdale Electric

Cooperative to ensure we maintain quality work.

Affordability

As you know, REC is a not-for-profit cooperative, and that means we strive to keep our costs in check to keep our rates affordable. This extends to our approach to vegetation management. If trees grow too close to power lines, the potential for expensive repairs also increases. Effective tree trimming and other vegetation management efforts keep costs down for everyone.

Our community is a special place. We appreciate the beauty trees afford, but we also know our community depends on us to provide reliable energy. Through vegetation management, we are better able to keep the power lines clear, prepare for future weather events and secure the reliability of the grid.



PRACTICE SAFETY WHEN DIY-ING

These days many of us are spending more time at home and finding new, creative ways to enhance our living space. Tackling do-it-yourself (DIY) projects for the home can be fun and cost-effective, so why not roll up those sleeves and get started! Whether you're painting the front door with a fresh hue or finally upgrading those patio lights, successfully completing a DIY home project is incredibly satisfying. But many of these projects do not come without risks. Here are a few safety tips to keep in mind as you get to work.

- **Start by selecting a designated work area.** The amount of space you'll need will depend on the size and scope of your project, but make sure you have adequate lighting and ventilation (if necessary). Required tools and equipment should be located in your workspace and organized for easy access.
- **Personal protective equipment (PPE) is your friend.** We know you're a pro but investing a few bucks in PPE is essential for most home projects. Stock up on safety goggles, dust masks, ear plugs (or noise reduction ear protectors), gloves and any other kind of protection you'll need for your project. Remember to wear appropriate clothing and shoes. (Ditch the sandals for this!)
- **Work slowly and clean as you go.** When you rush through a DIY project, you'll likely end up with less desirable results than you intended, or worse, you could

make a costly or dangerous mistake. Take your time and remember that you are in control of the project. You should also clean as you go to ensure a safer workspace. Pick up any scrap materials, tools that aren't in use, and any tripping hazards.

- **Be cautious with power tools.** Annually, 8% of electrocutions in the United States are attributed to improper use of power tools. The Electrical Safety Foundation International offers the following safety tips:
 - Use ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) with every power tool to protect against electrical shock.
 - Never use power tools near live electrical wires or water pipes.
 - Use extreme caution when cutting or drilling into walls where electrical wires or water pipes could be accidentally touched or penetrated.
 - If a power tool trips a safety device while in use, take the tool to a manufacturer-authorized repair center for service.
 - Do not use power tools without the proper guards.
 - When using a wet-dry vacuum cleaner or a pressure washer, be sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions to avoid electrical shock.

Remember, you should only tackle DIY home projects within your skill and comfort level. For projects that require extensive electrical work, we strongly recommend you hire a licensed, qualified electrician for assistance.





THE WOOGA HORN

By Al Cornell

One side of the machine shed had a built-in corncrib and a small workbench area. Loose boards laid across the shed's joists made a loft area for storage. Though Terry and I had learned to explore that area early on, some of those treasures reached their potential years later.

After Terry got his driver's license, we started thinking about the old car horn among those prized possessions. Grandad Morgan had moved up the hollow here in 1916. The only car he ever owned was purchased for his son Wayne. Devastation struck the hollow when Wayne died at 14 years old. He had cleaned a rabbit when he had a cut on his hand and may have gotten tularemia. I don't know if those auto parts came from that car, but I had heard that they were from a 1920-something Dodge.

In turn, we stepped up on the corn planter and hoisted ourselves to the shed loft. We maneuvered past the old platform rocking chair that Sally and I restored years later. At one time, it harbored a bumblebee nest that Terry had discovered much to his chagrin. He had been forced to decide if jumping to the ground would likely cause less damage than hanging around while more boomers zeroed in on his bare skin. With the bees an item of years gone by, we walked across the single board that connected the main loft floor to the area above the workbench. We searched through the stash.

After retrieving the horn, we dug around through some tools and odds and ends to find some pieces of blasting wire so we could test it with a 12-volt battery. It worked, but it did not sound like any horn we had ever heard. When we completed the circuit, it blared, "Wooga, wooga."

Of course, we just had Dad's car to which we could install our magnificent find. Since, unlike more well-to-do contemporaries, Terry had no car of his own to toy with, we had not been allowed to advance very far in auto mechanics.

We understood that by completing a circuit, the horn would be activated. So, a piece of yellow blasting wire was connected to each battery post. We strung the wires to a location under the steering wheel and bared their ends. When we touched the wires together, the old horn bellowed.

With the '56 DeSoto so equipped, we took a little drive. Mostly, we were just out to enjoy our new toy. I can't recall entertaining anyone else with our wonderous wooga. Terry was more into girls. Okay, I was impressed with the pretty ones, but it took another decade before I got anywhere with that. We never got a chance to see what sort of impression it might have had on young lasses carrying buckets of eggs to the house.

What we soon determined was that it had an amazing effect on the hill country's numerous black and white girls on pasture. Those Holsteins had just been waiting for some wooga, wooga music. They kicked up their heels. They ran. They shook their heads. They chased. I hope they stopped at the fences. They were acting crazy, and we never stayed around to see the outcome.

After our second run, a couple things happened. We started getting concerned that somebody's cows may have gotten out or even that some old cranky farmer might have gotten upset if he saw his cows having a good time. Then Dad examined our wiring job and wasn't impressed. That ended the era of the wooga horn.

Do you have a knack for writing? If you've got an original story you'd like to share with your fellow members, we'd love to see it! Please send it to Trevor Clark via email, tclark@rec.coop, or mail it to the REC office, 1027 N. Jefferson St., Richland Center, WI 53581. You just might see your work in print on this page!

Shannon Clark, Manager/CEO

1027 N. Jefferson St., P.O. Box 439, Richland Center, WI 53581


608-647-3173

www.rec.coop

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